

## **9545, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Charter Sch of Gary**

### **PROJECT ABSTRACT**

At night, from Gary, Indiana, located on Lake Michigan, you can see Chicago's beautiful skyline twinkling across the water, the popular Lake Street Shopping District with boutiques and galleries, and a new riverboat casino. But Gary is a lifetime away from that lifestyle: Gary was artificially founded by the U.S. Steel Corporation in 1906 to handle the booming steel industry. But the 2nd half of the 20th century saw the steel industry shut down, water and air pollution destroying the environment, and unemployment rampant, especially among the under-educated minorities who had been working in the steel mills. In 2000, the per capita income was less than \$15,000/yr. Population dropped from over 200,000 (in the heyday of the steel mills) to under 100,000 in the city area, but with a greater Gary population of almost a half million. Ten years ago Gary had the highest U.S. crime rate, and the beautiful huge buildings were being demolished or abandoned. When the State passed Riverboat Casino legislation, Donald Trump thought his boat could turnaround Gary but even he took a bankruptcy on that casino. Today, over ¼ of adults in Gary did not graduate from HS; 1/3 of the families are living in poverty; and 64% of the households with children are not married.

The 21st Century Charter School of Gary (21st C) is a public, K-14, charter school serving 375 students from this locale; it is located by the FBI headquarters near downtown Gary, with many students coming from the Gary Community Schools where there is a 50% graduation rate. This project will be based on the over-arching goal to: (1) Improve K-12 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, based on the demonstrated need, especially in the STEM areas, focused in Elementary and Secondary Science, Math, and Reading (using Discovery Science Education; Yenka Chemistry & Physics and Pearson's Biology, Math, and Reading/Language Arts Digital Pathways; and GPS, and GIS programs from the Purdue University 4H Extension.) 21ST C currently has a Middle College program that it will expand with all students being expected to earn university level credits prior to HS graduation. In order to accomplish that, 2 additional goals will be addressed: (2) Assist every student in becoming TECHNOLOGICALLY LITERATE by the end of 8th grade (to cross the digital divide regardless of race, family income, disability, native language, or other previous barriers to access (Airlates, Moodle; Power Point; GPS, AP classes Lumen Projectors, digital microscopes) (3) Build faculty capacity through PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT and partnership training to use innovative yet scientifically research-based-- technology, (Calculator Lab, Moodle lessons, ELMO projections, Airliners, and Smart Sync) integrated into the Standards-based curricula and classroom instruction. The Matrix shows the goals and the related Objectives, Activities, Performance Outcomes and Evaluation Tools. All reading, science, and math programs were selected based on Best Practices and Scientifically-Based Research. 21ST C strives to provide traditionally underserved students with the tools and opportunities they need to succeed, to be competitive in the global workplace and to ensure their academic achievement and career preparation will be the best in the U.S.